

421
Not DEATH, but IMMORTALITY,
the desir'd Relief of the Burthen'd Christian.

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SERMON

Preach'd Jan. 25. 1708.

At the Late Reverend

Mr. MATTHEW SYLVESTER'S

Meeting-Place,

IN

BLACK-FRIARS,

Upon 2 COR. 5. 4.

By ISAAC BATES, M.A.

LONDON,

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W. Musgrave



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TO THE
READER.

WE shall detain the Reader no longer than to acquaint him with the Reasons of the Publication of this Discourse: The Reverend Mr. Matthew Sylvelter, deceas'd, desired the Author to preach for him Jan. the 25th, 1702, in the Morning; and hearing the following Sermon deliver'd, he talk'd of it abundantly afterwards, and with uncommon Pleasure, Life and Taste; thereby shewing (as he did often by Discourse of the same kind) great Willingness, as well as great Preparation to put off the Body, and change his present State for one of Immortality and Life. Now a great part of the Doctrine of this Sermon proving sutable to the surprising Event of Divine Providence, this valuable Person's suddain Death, which fell out that same Day, after he had himself preached in the Afternoon; and being likewise the Subject of his last familiar and edifying Discourses with some of his Relations and Friends, it was de-

To the Reader.

sired by them, that this Sermon might be printed, to which the Author consented;

And only desires this, “ That the Divine Blessing may accompany it; And
“ that it may find (if not, that it may
“ create) in many, what it found in one,
“ viz. raised Thoughts, clear Views, frequent Discourses of the Heavenly State,
“ and a growing Thirst after it.

There is now in the Press, *The Christian's Race and Patience describ'd, &c. Second Part.* By Mr. Matthew Sylvester.

2 Cor. V. 4.

For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burthen'd: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that Mortality might be swallowed up of Life.

IN these Words you may see a great deal of sober Philosophy and useful Divinity; you may see very solid and useful Principles of Knowledge laid down, very regular and holy Affections exercis'd, and very Consolation hoped for: You may see an Eminent Christian and an Apostle, in his own Name, and in the Name of his afflicted Brethren in the Ministry, discoursing the Trouble and Difficulty of their present State in the World, and of the Remedy they desired, to give 'em Ease and Quiet. They groaned, being burthen'd; and what Remedy they desired, was not *to be unclothed, but clothed upon*. In all this Apostle's Discourses and Reflections upon his present State, and that of his Brethren, set down in the Text and the Verses before it, you'll plainly see, He separates himself from the Body, He sets it aside, and speaks of it with an holy Unconcernedness, as if it were a thing distinct from Himself and the Man: He supposeth the Soul to be the Person, and the Body the House, Tabernacle, or Dwelling he dwells in; *Ver. 1. For we know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God, &c. Ver. 2. For in this we groan earnestly.* *Ver. 4. which contains the Words of my Text, For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burthen'd, &c.*

You may take notice of these five things in the Words of my Text, which I shall discourse a little upon.

1.) Of the evident Distinction of the Soul from the Body, its Nature and Operations, and its Excellency above the Body *We that are in this Tabernacle.*

2.) Of the becoming and apt Comparisons, whereby the Apostle describes these Bodies of ours, and our present State with them: He compares 'em to a *Tabernacle*, and

6 *Not Death, but Immortality, &c.*

to *Clothing*, and intimates we are united to 'em, as a Man to his Mansion-house and Clothes.

(3dly.) You may take notice of the Uneasiness that attends Good Men in this Embodied State; *They groan, being then'd.*

(4thly.) — Of the true Remedy and Relief which a Good Man longs for, and desires after, when groaning under the Afflictions of the Body: *We groan, &c. not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon.*

(5thly.) — Of the Efficacy and abundant Sufficiency of this Remedy to cure all Groanings, and free from all Uneasinesses: *To be clothed upon*; the Remedy the Good Man longs after, tends to this, or comes up to this, His *Mortality*, or mortal Part is *swallowed up of Life*, by it.

(1st.) You may see the Evident Distinction of the Soul from the Body in its Nature and Operations, and its Excellency above it, in this Text: *For we that are in this Tabernacle, &c.*

The Body, you see, is said here to be the Tabernacle, the Soul is said to be the Person inhabiting it; and, to be sure, the Inhabitant is something distinct and different from his Habitation in which he dwells. Again, You see this Apostle *Paul*, according to his Soul, makes Comparisons to represent his Body, reflecteth upon the Uneasiness and Difficulties that attend him in it, expresseth his Faith and Hope to be delivered from these, by a Change sometime to be made in his Body, from Mortality to Immortality and Life: His Soul therefore, the thing which makes these Comparisons concerning the Body, as *something without him*, and which knows nothing of his Discourse; his Soul which reflects; his Soul which exerciseth Faith thus substantially, evidenceth it self to be another thing, and a distinct thing from the Body. The Soul appears from this Text, not only to be a distinct thing from the Body, but a much more excellent thing than it: The Soul judges of its present State and the Inconveniences of it, compar'd with a future one; the Body cannot do this: The Soul acts Faith on the future Reward; the Body cannot: The Soul complains of a present Life, desires a future one, and exerts all Moral and Religious Acts; the Body is stupid and incapable of these Acts.

The Soul, 'tis plain, is something distinct from the Body, from Matter that compounds it, and from any Power that can be in Matter, or result from it. It can arise from no Particles of Matter happily hitting together, from no Parts of the Body, let 'em be never so advantageously placed; it can be no *Efflorescence* or Flower of Matter, no *Mode of Motion*,

Not Death, but Immortality, &c. 7

the *Epicureans* of Old, and some Philosophers of the present Age, would have us believe. The Soul, as my Text plainly suggesteth, hath Dominion over the Body; hath a power of Thinking and Reasoning within it self, distinct from the Body, and independent of it; can judge concerning the Body and its Union with it, as much as it can do of any Foreign Subject; can continue clothed with it, or put it off, and yet remain a Contemplative and Happy Being for all this. You may see, from the Example of our Apostle in the Text, and the beginning of this Chapter, That the Soul, when it withdraws it self from the Body and its Interests, and judgeth of things within it self, discovers Truth most clearly, and pronounceth upon our State, both as it is in this World, and as it will be in the next, most wisely. The Soul, retired from the Body, and acting by it self, exerciseth Faith, and Hope, and holy Desires, and holy Aversions, most freely and vigorously. There are a great many spiritual and internal Acts of Religion which the Soul alone, as retired from the Body, and forgetting it, is able to perform. The Body can no more contemplate God, no more desire after the spiritual Pleasures of Heaven, no more believe in, and hope for things invisible; can no more love Truth and Moral Good; than a creeping thing can fly: These are Exercises too high for its Capacity and Nature.

By the way then, When you read such Words as these of the Apostle in my Text, *We that are in this Tabernacle, &c.* Learn from him to exercise your Souls, and to make holy and mortified Contemplations upon your selves. Learn from him to look upon your Bodies as a part of your selves that is inferior, as a part you must meet with Affliction in, as a part you must shortly expect to put off, as a Man putteth off his rags: Learn to look upon your Bodies as the uncertain and shifting Habitation which you must shortly quit; and if you be faithful Christians, you may expect to exchange them for a much better built Habitation at the Resurrection-Day. From want of this Separation of themselves from the Body, and bodily Affections and Employments, to contemplate now and then the Trials and Miseries of this Life, the Infirmities and Clogs of our present State, and the promised Happiness of a future one, Men become foolish, foolish, sensual, atheistical, and what not. And from want of the just Opinion of their Souls Excellency above the Body, Men neglect their Souls, Men pollute 'em with filthy Lusts, and destroy them. For want of care to treat the Soul as the ruling Part and chief Part of the Man, as the chief Actor and Guide of the Man, they grow earthly, sensual and devilish; they are dead while they live, and their Bodies become

come the Prison and Fetters of their Souls, instead of being the Tabernacles and convenient Habitations of 'em. The Bodies of such as have not exercised their Souls in Religious Thought, and esteem'd them, are buried after Death; but their Souls have been buried all their Life-time, and the Body hath been the Grave in which they have been intomb'd.

The 2^d thing observed in the Words of my Text, is the becoming and apt Comparisons, whereby the Apostle describes these Bodies of ours, and our present State of Union with them.

Our Bodies are compar'd to two things. To Tabernacles, and to Vestments or Clothing; *We that are in these Tabernacles do groan, &c. not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, &c.*

Now these two things, a Tabernacle and Clothing, are just and becoming Similitudes, whereby to illustrate the Body, and the conveniency of it. These do not deprectate the Body too much, do not disgrace and vilifie it beyond measure: Tabernacles, you know, are useful things, are necessary conveniences of Humane Life; so likewise is Clothing a thing of necessity: You know, the condition of that Man that hath neither Tabernacle to lodge in, nor Clothing to cover his Nakedness, is very miserable, and far from being desirable. But the Comparisons which many of the Ancient Heathen Philosophers and Orators used, when they spoke of the Body, were very disparaging and debasing; these Men kept not within the bounds of Sobriety and Discretion at all. They speak of the Body as a Bond or Chain in which the Soul is fetter'd, as the Prison of the Soul, as a dead Weight hanging upon it, as the Load and Burthen of the Soul, as a Coup or Cage wherein it is shut up. * *Plutarch* saith, The Soul is shut up in the Body, as in a Grinding-house, or House of slavish Labour and Correction. † *Iamblicus*, another of 'em saith, The Soul endureth a Punishment all the time it is united to the Body: He tells us, it is dealt with much after the same manner as the People of *Tuscany* formerly dealt with their Pirates and Robbers; they tied dead Bodies fast to them while alive, the Mouth of the dead Body to their Mouths, its Hands to their Hands, and made every part of the two Bodies to correspond; and left 'em to die in this manner, as their Punishment. ‖ *Porphyry* tells us of *Plotin* the Platonic Philosopher, That he was ashamed that he was in the Body, he had such a little Opinion of it; and that he never would bear to tell of his own Family, his Parents Names, or his Country. He tells us farther, That he would re-

* *In Conviv. sept. Sap.* † *Protrept. cap. 8.* ‖ *In vit. Plotin.*

permit a Picture of himself to be drawn, when it was desired, he replied to his Friend, It was enough to bear one Shadow or Image, meaning his Body, which Nature had encompassed him withal; and he asks his Friend *Amelius* (the Person that desired his Picture should be drawn) *Could he think that a Shadow of a shadow left to Posterity, could be a Spectacle worth looking upon?* Now these Heathens made a shew of Wisdom in neglecting the Body, as the Apostle speaks, *Col. 2. 23.* and in contemning and exposing it by their Similitudes; but they really expos'd their folly, and were unjust to their own Bodies by using these. The Body in general, is a good Companion, and a fit Instrument, and an helpful Servant to the Soul. The Body indeed, as corrupted by Sin, is some Impediment to the Soul in its pursuit of Happiness; but this ought not make us vilify our Bodies; for we may say the same of the Soul, even this part, as it is corrupted by Sin, is an Impediment to the Happiness of the Body, instead of being a Promoter of it. The Wound and Defect Mankind contracted by the Fall, has made both these principal Parts of 'em unserviceable, yea great hindrances sometimes to each others Felicity.

But the Body, I say, speaking in general of it, is not to be condemned: It is a Creature of God curiously framed, one contriv'd with wondrous Art. *I will praise thee, for I am wonderfully and fearfully made,* Psal. 139. 14. It is a Temple, as sometimes Wise-men have called it: It is the Tabernacle (as the Text speaks) of a God-like Soul; and therefore is to be treated with decent Regard both living and dead: It is a Meeting-place to the Soul, and that by which it acts usefully upon the Stage of the World, and in the Course of Life: It is a Part which compleats the Man: It is the Object of God's Grace and Favour on Earth in every Member and Hair of it, and that he will glorify in Heaven.

If our Bodies were such mean things, why should any count it an Evil which destroys them? Why should we thank God for preserving them? Or why indeed should God employ himself in giving Rain and fruitful Seasons to fill 'em with Food and Gladness, and be at so much munificent Expence to preserve them? Why should they be buried with Solemnity? Why should the Multitude of Mankind have been guilty of indulging the Body, and preferring it before their Souls, and likewise mistakes about the just Degree of Mortification, necessary to promote Vertue, have been the Reasons of Mens doing too hard upon the Body, both in their Discourses and Conduct. But it is good to speak respectfully of our Bodies, and to give these Servants of Jesus Christ, tho' meaner ones than our selves, creditable Names, and to compare 'em to valuable things, as the Apostle doth in my Text.

These Comparisons made use of, I have said, are apt ones, as well as creditable ones, whereby to set off the Body.

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As to the First of 'em, a Tabernacle: This is a very Similitude. A Tabernacle is no fixed Place of Habitation, *Heb.* 9. nor are our Bodies fixed Habitations or Places of Abode, which our Souls long stay in. Tabernacles again, among the Ancients as well as Moderns, have been commonly built of vile and ordinary Materials, such as Boughs of Trees, Skins of Beasts, Stalks, Straw, &c. and the Matter of which the Body is made, is like that of Tabernacles for Vileness; our Bodies are Clay and Dust, and to these they shall return. Tabernacles I may yet add, were the Shelters of Travellers and Sojourners from Heat, Rain, and other Inconveniences of the Weather in their ambulatory State: And so the present Body is the Lodgement of the Soul, while it is in its State of Pilgrimage, and upon its Journey into another World.

As to the Second of these Similitudes, to which the Apostle likens the Body, *viz.* Clothing or a Vestment, this is apt enough too. Garments, you know wax old, change and consume, *Psalm* 102. 26. *All of them shall wax old like a Garment, &c.* and so doth the Body. Our Garments are things which we do not keep on our Backs a long time together, but put 'em off; nor are our Souls long clothed with our Bodies, before God calls them to put 'em off, and throw 'em aside as cast Garments. Garments again, are rent, Moth-eaten, and liable to be many ways spoiled; and so it is with our Bodies, they are liable to many destructive Evils and Accidents.

We may say therefore agreeably enough to the Scripture-Illustrations, when any of our Acquaintance are dead, 'There is an 'Habitation forsaken and left empty, in which a Spiritual Inhabitant formerly dwelt: There is a Building pulled down, which 'will be re-edified in Glory, at the Resurrection, if it was a sanctified one; there is a commodious House turned into the Matter out of which it was originally raised. There is an Inhabitant that hath left our Neighbourhood and World, and 'is gone into its unalterable State of Happiness or Misery. 'It sojourned here so many Years, and pitched its Tent, may be '20, 30, 40, &c. Years, and then departed hence.

'We may say, agreeably to the Scripture-phrase, when a Friend 'dies, a Soul hath put off its Clothing, its course Garment of 'frail Dust, it is now unstripped of every thing that is corruptible, mortal and perishing.

And truly those Souls are happy that can put off their Bodies in hope to put 'em on again Glorious Ones at the Resurrection: Those Souls are happy that leave the World with such Encouragements of hope thro' Christ, as that they can put off their Bodies as willingly and composedly, as they used to put off their Clothes. And Examples of such Souls have been, and yet are, tho they are few. Those Souls are happy that leave a poor decayed ruined Tabernacle, in hope of an House not made with

Hands,

Hands, eternal in the Heavens, or in hopes to be clothed upon with their House or Body which is from Heaven. See v. 3.

The third Thing in the Text which offers it self to our notice, is the Uneasiness which attends Christians or good Men in this embodied State, they groan being burthen'd: *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burthen'd.*

The State of the best Men, while they are in the Body, is generally an afflicted one, a State of groaning, not of rejoycing. *Man is born unto trouble as the Sparks fly upwards. In the World we shall have trouble,* said our Lord Jesus to his Disciples. All Men meet with Trouble in the Flesh, and the best Men meet with most of it, commonly: now under Burthens and Troubles Nature will groan. Even the innocent Nature of our Lord Jesus Christ was troubled, and expressed its Disturbance at the approach of his last Conflicts and Sufferings; *Joh. 12.27. Now is my Soul troubled, ταραχῆται, is disturbed; and what shall I say? &c.*

If you ask what are the Burthens that cause a good Man to groan and sigh while in the Body? They are innumerable. He often (as this Apostle here did) meets with Persecution from Men. See Chap. 4. 8, 9, 10. *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair, &c. For we which live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our Bodies,* Tim. 3. 12. *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer Persecution.*

The good Man again is vexed with the Envyings and false Accusations of weaker Christians that profess love to him. He is wounded and abused in the House of his Friend, as well as by his professed Enemies, *Eccles. 4. 4. Again I considered all Travel and every right Work, that for this a Man is envied of his Neighbour. This also is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.*

The good Man again groans, being burthen'd with his own Corruptions, the Corruptions of the times, &c.

And besides what Burthens are incident to a Man, as he is good, he labours under many which are the common Lot of all Mankind, since the Fall. Mankind are the Servants of Misery, rather than the Kings and Governours of the World, as an Heathen well observed. All Ages have their Evils and Inconveniences that they groan under, Infancy, Childhood, Manhood, &c. We are born crying, and live a mournful Life; insomuch that many Heathens who knew not the Original Cause of Evil, and the gracious Designs of God in Christ, have asserted, *lucorum scelerum Causa nasci homines*, that Men were born to be punished for their Wickedness.

The good and the bad groan under a Body of Diseases and Death: They are consum'd with Hecticks, worn away with Consumptions, have their Spirits evaporated with Sweats and Agonies, caused by one violent Disease or another.

The good and the bad lose their Relations and Friends, groan under

under the Stroaks of God upon others, and are pierced wth them to their very Hearts and Bowels. Even our Lord Jesus, the only instance of a perfect Composure of Temper, groaned in Spirit, and troubled himself at the Death of his Friend Lazarus, John 11. 23.

Both the good and the bad are liable to publick Dangers and Desolations, to private Losses, Shares, Labours, Disappointments and manifold Adversities.

Both the good and bad have their peculiar Weaknesses and Inconveniencies of natural Temper, &c.

If we consider the Flood of Evils which pour in upon Mankind while in the Body, separately from the gracious Confortions of Christianity, to allay these, and sanctify them, we may well say with Solomon, *Better is the day of Death than the Day of ones Birth.*

Considering, I say, the manifold Troubles of this Life, the Heathen Wise-men did not without some good shew of Reason dispute, Whether this Life was not rather to be called a Death; they did not without a good shew of Reason, weep over those that were born, and sing over those that were dead; bury the Dead with dry Eyes, as Persons set free from the Bonds of a miserable Life; make Honey a Symbol of Death, and Gall a Symbol of Life.

Well, the State of those that live in the Body being such a State as this, a State of groaning and many Sorrows, we may see as just Reason to weep for our selves and our own Sins, that have encompassed us with so much Evil, as for our dead Friends; nay we may see juster Reason: We may fall in with the Words of the Wise-man, *I praised the Dead which are already dead, more than the Living which are yet alive.* We may fall in with these words intirely, if they be restrained to good Men that die in the Lord; their State is more desirable than that of the Living: *Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord, &c.* In the Grave they groan not, as being heavily burthen'd.

But to proceed, The fourth Thing which offers it self to our notice in the Text, is the true Remedy and Relief which good Men long for and desire after, when groaning under the Afflictions of the Body. *We groan being burthened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon;* in which Body we will not, or wish not to be unclothed, *ὅτι φοβούμεν*, but over and above clothed, *ἐπενδυσασθαι*.

A good Man afflicted and pressed by the Enemies, the Burthen of the Labours that affect his Body, fixes not his Desires, setteth not his Heart chiefly and directly upon quitting the Body, but upon having it changed and exalted into a glorious and immortal one, which cannot be touched by any Affliction. A good Man desireth not Death properly and strictly; Death is what he submiteth to: But he desireth the Consequences of Death, Immortality and Glory. Or, if you will, we may say

us; A good Man desireth not Death as his utmost End and Expectation, but the Immortality which God hath promised him, and which Death makes way for: He desires Death only as the unavoidable way and means to Immortality. This Apostle Paul tells us, *He had a Desire to depart, and to be with Christ*, Phil. 1. He desired not Dissolution or Departure alone, neither did he desire this as his utmost End; but he desired as a Means to compass his utmost End, *viz. being with Christ*.

1st. When we are under the Troubles of Life, to desire to be clothed or dead, speaks Infirmary, Impatience, and the prevalence of Temptation. *Elijah*, impatient of the Persecution of *Ab, 1 Kings 19. 4.* requesteth to die; *he sat down under a Terebinth Tree, and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my Life.* *Job*, overcome with trouble, curseth his Day, and envied the state of the dead, and of those that never had a Being, *Job 3.*

2dly. To desire to be dead merely and abstractedly, is the desire of the Wicked and Unbelieving; some of which have been justified by their guilty Consciences into Despair, as *Cain*; others have actually destroyed themselves, as *Judas* and *Saul*. The good Man, the Man of Faith and Hope, looketh beyond Death, to the Promises of everlasting Peace and Happiness in the future life; The Man of Faith looketh for a proportionable Reward for all the Sufferings of this Life, and composeth his Temper to be patient, till God deliver him, and call him away from his Tribles: But the Man that lives by Sense, and hath no Hope in God; the Man that is affected only with present things, desireth for Death only when oppressed with Trouble; and looks beyond it one step.

Again, To desire Death abstractedly, to remedy present Evils and Afflictions, is unbecoming the Relation Men stand in to God, and the Subjection they owe to him as their Lord and Master. Servants should be willing to keep the Posts their Lord and absolute Owner hath set 'em in, 'till he calls 'em away: Servants should mind the Will of a Good Master, who hath promised to reward 'em well for all their Sufferings and Labours, in due time.

Again, To desire Death alone, or to desire to cease to be, in order to be eased of present Afflictions, is a mean and culpable Action; it shews a little and weak Mind. To say no more, is a Desire unnatural, and against the Perfection of the Rational Creature, to desire to be freed from its Body, the Body being one part of it self that compleats its Being. The Apostle Paul, upon such accounts as these, carefully guards against giving any ground to think, That he and his Fellow-Preachers in the Gospel desired Death absolutely, or desired it any other way than as it was an unavoidable step to Immortality and Life. *1 Cor. 15. 30.* *For we labour, (saith this heavenly Saint) not that we will to be clothed, of these our Bodies; but we have a further reach in*

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our Desires after a Remedy of our Grievances, *we would clothed upon* with Bodies immortal and incapable of Affliction and Death, *θέλωμεν ἐπεδύσασθαι*; The Greek is plain, and intimates, we would have something more and better upon us instead of being willing, at least wishing to quit what we have; we would be *over and above clothed*, instead of being *unclothed*; we would have this mortal Body of ours clothed with a Garment of Immortality, as 1 Cor. 15. 54. The glorious Change which a good Man's Body shall undergo at the Resurrection, prepare it for living with God, the Apostle setteth forth, by having an upper or additional Garment put upon it, one that will so hide this old Garment of Mortality, and abundantly cover it, I may add, and alter it too, that it shall be swallowed up of Life.

The Immortalization of the present Body is *the desire* of the Saint. He is not desirous to part for ever with his old Companion in Labours and Sufferings; but he is desirous to have it put into a better Habit, and into a better State. He would have its Appetites rendered regular; he would have its Members cured of all their Weaknesses, Diseases and Grievances, and rendered more active in Duty, and more fit for all holy Employments; he would have all Darkness and Deformities exchanged for Lustre and Beauty, and all tendencies to Decays, Mortality and Corruption, changed for the contrary Qualities of Durableness, Immortality and Incorruption: He would, in a word, have his Body to have all the Perfection it is capable of, to render it glorious and happy.

Nature tells us, Experience tells, That a Good Man desires the Melioration of his Body, not the Destruction; he desires an Alteration in it, not a Divorce from it. *No Man ever hated his own Flesh*. Both Nature and Grace in a Good Man desires, after his Perfection, not his Perdition as to any part of himself.

I'll now proceed to the fifth and last thing in my Text, which offers it self to our Consideration, and this is the *Efficacy* and abundant *Sufficiency* of the Remedy that Good Men look for to cure them of their Groanings, and free them from their Burthens, *Their being clothed upon*, or, the Change that shall be made in the Bodies of Good Men at the Resurrection, comes up to this, what is mortal in 'em is swallowed up of Life, by it.

It is the Mortality of our Bodies, and their tendency to Corruption and Dissolution, that gives Burthens and Afflictions the advantage against us: Persecuting Enemies wound us thro' our Bodies, our mortal Part; but cannot touch our immortal Part, our Souls. *Fear not them which kill the Body, and after that can do no more*, &c. saith our Lord. Labours oppress us by our Bodies and their Weakness. It is our Flesh which groans, complains, and receives the Impressions which cause Miserie to the whole Man. When God therefore freeth our Bo-

from this disadvantageous Quality of Mortality, and clothes us with Immortality, then we are cured, we are rendered invulnerable to external Evils, we are out of danger of Weeping and Groaning, and all mournful Expressions of Passion.

Who now would not wish themselves clothed upon? their Bodies involved or inwrapped in a Robe of Immortality, that is mortal in 'em may be quite drunk up of Life, and swallowed up of it, as they are that are drowned in a Sea? The Original Word for *swallowed up* is *נארארוב*, which is us'd, *Heb. 11. 29.* to signify the drowning of *Pharaoh* and his Host in the Red Sea.

Now, what Man that really hath the Faith he professeth to be in the happy Change that shall be made upon him in the other World, will not be willing to go into it, upon God's Call? It certainly affords abundant ground of Comfort to a good Christian, to think at his, or her Death; "I am a going to drop Mortality, to quit that Flesh and Body which exposes me to sufferings and Groans. I am a going into that World and State, wherein I shall be all Life, wherein I shall be so changed, that none of these present sensible things can hurt or vex me; and so secured that nothing shall do it. I have lived 40, or 50, or 60, or more Years in a World, where Death hath prevailed over Life, and robbed me of the Sweet and Comfort of it: but now I am stepping into a World where Life prevails over Death, where Mortality is entirely swallowed up of Life. I am a going where my Soul presently shall rejoice, and bath it self in Pleasure and Delight, and where my Body, its Tabernacle, in a little while shall be so firmly rebuilt that it shall never wax old and decay more. I am a going into a Kingdom where Death hath never come, nor ever shall come.

Now, from this Text and Discourse, (1st.) Observe the difficult State of the Living. Life is a State of many Miseries and Afflictions; and the better any Man is, the more of Affliction he meets with generally. They that are in the Body have no end of praising their own State; it is no safe one. Afflictions and Death are always near 'em. Remember them which suffer Diversity, as being your selves also in the Body, *Heb. 13. 3. i. e.* pity and pray for the Afflicted: This may soon be your own state; for you carry about with you a weak and penetrable Tent, &c. It is the Saying of the Son of Sirach, *Eccl. 40. 1.* Great Travel is created for every Man, and an heavy Yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, from the Day that they go out of their Mother's Womb, till the Day that they return to the Mother of all things. We pity the dead, but we may pity one another that are living, with much, or indeed with more reason; for Sin hath turned Life into a continual Death as it were. There is Darknes out of the Grave, as well as in it: Yea, and all the Sorrow and Groaning which attend the Good Man, falls on this side the of Grave; it is that are in this Tabernacle, that do groan, being burthen'd.

(2^{dly}.) Ob-

(2dly.) Observe the comfortable State of those that die Lord. Death is a Deliverance from Evils, a Quietness from some Labours; 'tis the Sleep of the wearied Body, and the to Reward and Glory to the victorious Soul. Dying is the of a Good Man's Troubles: the State after it is all Gladness, Titillation, Enjoyment, Entertainment, and what not.

None are happy before Death: After it, a Life never begins to the Godly, a Life that immortalizeth Body and Soul, a Life unmixt with Death, a Life that admitteth not one Sigh, one Tear, one Dilease, one Cross, one annoying thing, or any thing that implies Evil. After Death, Life, and Rest, and Peace, flow in like a River.

(3dly.) Observe whether the Desires of a Good Man carry when under the Afflictions of the Body, and involved in Disturbances of the present World, even to the glorious and mortal Life God hath promis'd him. The Ungodly and Carnal men wish themselves dead, wish themselves out of this troublesome World, comfort themselves they shall be quiet in the Grave, and so will any Beast be. But an Holy Soul looks beyond Death and the Indolence of that State, to everlasting Life and Joy. Carnal Men are like Persons standing near a frightful precipice, that only look down at the Depth, Melancholy and sorrow of the Descent: Good Men are like Persons standing such a Precipice, that yet look over it, and entertain their thoughts with the pleasant Hills on the other side.

The Good Christian not only desires freedom from the toils of this Life, a Desire which Nature prompts all Men to; but desires to taste the Joy of a future Life: He ardently desires to be with God, to dwell in Heaven, in an House that is eternal. A True Christian hath a laudable aspiring Mind; he would where Light and Life dwells; he would experience the Pleasures of a sinless and of a perfect State; he would have the glory of the Body the Gospel at present only gives hopes of; he would with the Glorious God he is promis'd to enjoy; he would change Earth for Heaven, Mortality for Life that never ends, else he cannot be satisfied.

To conclude, Let us not fall below our selves, nor shew our selves as Christians, any of us; but take opportunity from all the Afflictions, Crosses and Losses of this Life, to reach at the future State of Immortality. Let us make advantage of every Burthen and Difficulty that affects us while in the Body, take occasion from it to look at the happy state promis'd in the World before us, and to long for it. Let the Dainties, the Delicacies, all the Briars and Thorns, and noxious Plants of this cursed Earth and Soil, turn our Minds and Desires toward the Satisfaction and delicious Fruits of the real Land of Promise, Heaven. — We shall be always uneasy, always growing, always wanting somewhat more, never fully satisfied, till we arrive there.

